

EPA Climate Change and Water News

November 22, 2013

EPA Climate Change and Water News is a bi-weekly newsletter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Water that features news and information about EPA and other federal agencies related to climate change and water. Partner activities, as well as related events and publications, are also included.

To learn more about climate change impacts on water resources, visit our website at:
<http://www.epa.gov/water/climatechange>.

For training, conferences, webinars, and other events, visit:
<http://water.epa.gov/scitech/climatechange/Calendar-of-Events.cfm>.

U.S. EPA News

- [EPA and Federal Partners Announce National Drought Resilience Partnership](#)
- [EPA and New England Leaders Convene to Help Communities Prepare for Climate Challenges](#)
- [EPA to Host Three-Part Webcast Series for State and Local Governments on Communications for Climate Programs – December 4, 11, and 18, 2013](#)
- [EPA Releases Watershed Management Optimization Support Tool](#)
- [Seeking Feedback on our EPA Water and Climate Change Website](#)

Other U.S. Federal Agency News

- [Department of Interior to Host Seminar on National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaption Strategy on December 9, 2013](#)
- [U.S. Government Accountability Office \(GAO\) Releases Report on Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Actions that Limit its Progress](#)

Other News

- [Climate Central Launches “Surging Seas Risk Finder” for Florida](#)
- [Georgetown Climate Center Seeking Applications from Government Entities \(and NGOs Working with Government Entities\) to Provide In-Kind Legal and Policy Support for State and Local Adaptation Projects](#)

U.S. EPA News

EPA and Federal Partners Announce National Drought Resilience Partnership

As part of the President’s Climate Action Plan, the Obama Administration has launched a National Drought Resilience Partnership (the Partnership). The Partnership aims to align federal drought policies across the government and help communities manage the impact of drought by linking information (monitoring, forecasts, outlooks, and early warnings) with drought preparedness and long-term resilience strategies in critical sectors such as agriculture, municipal water systems, energy, recreation, tourism and transportation. In its first year, the Partnership will focus on creating a new, web-based portal to ease access to federal agency drought recovery resources, hosting more frequent regional drought outlook forums, supporting the coordination of a national soil moisture monitoring network, and identifying a single

point of contact for the public. In collaboration with local, state and regional governments, the Partnership will undertake a pilot project in a western area hard hit by drought to create a local-scale drought resilience plan that could be applied in other areas. For the press release, visit:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/11/15/introducing-national-drought-resilience-partnership>. To learn more, visit:

<http://www.drought.gov/media/pgfiles/ndrp/Drought%20Resilience%20Partnership%20Release%20FINAL.pdf>.

EPA and New England Leaders Convene to Help Communities Prepare for Climate Challenges

Answering the challenge presented in President Obama's Climate Action Plan, EPA is spearheading a regional response to identify and launch actions to help New England communities become more resilient to the effects of climate change. Along with the six New England States, the Consensus Building Institute, Johnson & Wales University, and the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission, EPA convened a Climate Leaders Summit on November 8, 2013 in Providence, R.I. Fewer than 10 percent of New England Communities currently have adaptation efforts underway. Regional leaders representing the private and non-profit sectors, interstate organizations, and government at the local, state, and federal levels are committing to the identification and development of systemic solutions to help New England improve resiliency. For more information, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/region1/climatesummit/>.

EPA to Host Three-Part Webcast Series for State and Local Governments on Communications for Climate Programs – December 4, 11, and 18, 2013

EPA's State and Local Climate and Energy Program will host a three-part webcast series on communications on December 4th, 11th, and 18th, 2013. This series will provide information on communication strategies and methods that state and local governments can use to ensure the ongoing success of climate and clean energy programs. The structure of the three webcasts will parallel the general phases of program development and implementation: attracting stakeholder support and participation, sustaining change, and gaining momentum from program successes. Participants will learn how to design communications strategies to engage and empower stakeholders, use communications methods to instigate and sustain behavior change and foster individual and community solutions, and effectively communicate their programs' successes and resulting benefits to diverse audiences. For more information and to register, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/statelocalclimate/web-podcasts/forum.html>.

EPA Releases Watershed Management Optimization Support Tool

The Watershed Management Optimization Support Tool (WMOST) is an EPA, public-domain software application designed to facilitate integrated water resources management. The tool allows water resources managers and planners to screen a wide range of practices for cost-effectiveness in achieving watershed or water utilities management goals such as meeting projected water demand and minimum and maximum in-stream flow targets. WMOST optimizes within a watershed system context accounting for the direct and indirect cost and performance of each practice. WMOST can be used to (1) identify the most cost-effective mix of management practices to meet projected human demand and in-stream flow standards, (2) understand trade-offs between meeting management goals (e.g., human demand or in-stream flow) and total annual costs, (3) characterize the sensitivity of the solution to input data and parameters (e.g., effects of climate change and resulting changes in runoff and recharge rates on the mix of least-cost practices, the robustness of the recommended mix of practices to a range of cost assumptions). WMOST calculates the optimal solution based on user inputs of watershed characteristics, human water system characteristics, management practices, and management goals. For a user guide, case studies, and model files, visit:

http://cfpub.epa.gov/si/si_public_record_report.cfm?dirEntryId=262280. For theoretical documentation, visit: http://cfpub.epa.gov/si/si_public_record_report.cfm?dirEntryId=261780.

Seeking Feedback on our EPA Water and Climate Change Website

We are updating our Climate Change and Water website

(<http://water.epa.gov/scitech/climatechange/index.cfm>). Do you have ideas, comments, suggestions or

feedback you would like to share with us to improve our site? Please let us know by sending an email to water_climate_change@epa.gov by December 6, 2013.

Other Federal Agency News

Department of Interior to Host Seminar on National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaption Strategy on December 9, 2013, 12:15 - 1:15 p.m. eastern

Join Department of Interior's Office of Policy Analysis on December 9, 2013 for their monthly speaker series, which will feature a discussion on the "National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Fish, Wildlife, and Plants." The National Climate Change Policy Advisor for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will describe how this new strategy is being implemented by federal, state, and tribal governments to reduce negative impacts from a changing climate on natural resources, economies, and communities that depend on plants, animals, and ecosystems. He will discuss the role for Department of the Interior as well as its partners and engage the audience in discussing what is needed to overcome challenges. The presentation will be held in the Rachel Carson Room, located in the Basement Cafeteria of the Main Interior Building (1849 C St. NW, Washington, DC). Livestream is available at doi.gov/events. A login is required to ask questions. Please click "join" or "login to chat" and follow instructions. Closed captioning will be available, and the event will be recorded and posted to the Office of Policy Analysis' website. For more information, visit: http://www.doi.gov/ppa/Seminar_Series.cfm.

U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) Releases Report on Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Actions that Limit its Progress

The Great Lakes contain about 84 percent of North America's surface freshwater and provide economic and recreational benefits in the Great Lakes Basin. However, the Great Lakes face significant stresses--such as toxic pollution--that have caused ecological and economic damage to the region. Approximately \$1.3 billion has been appropriated to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), created in fiscal year 2010, which an interagency Task Force of 11 federal agencies, chaired by the EPA Administrator, oversees. In 2010, the Task Force issued an Action Plan to develop a comprehensive approach to restoring the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem. GAO was asked to review the GLRI. This report examines (1) how the GLRI is implemented by the Task Force agencies and other stakeholders, (2) the methods that EPA has in place to assess GLRI progress, (3) the progress identified by the Task Force agencies and nonfederal stakeholders, and (4) the views of nonfederal stakeholders on factors, if any, that may affect or limit GLRI progress. Several of those factors cited are inadequate infrastructure for wastewater or stormwater and the effects of climate change. In 2012, EPA took steps to incorporate climate change considerations into a small number of GLRI projects. To access the report, visit: <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-13-797>.

Other News

Climate Central Launches "Surging Seas Risk Finder" for Florida

Climate Central launched its Surging Seas Risk Finder for the state of Florida at the 5th Annual Southeast Florida Regional Climate Leadership Summit. The public web tool was developed in order to provide local regions and policy makers with tailored local information that can be used to assess and respond to the risks of sea level rise and coastal flooding. According to the Risk Finder web tool analysis, 2,120 square miles of land lie less than 3 feet above the high tide line in Florida, and \$156 billion in property value and 300,000 homes sit on land less than 3 feet above the high tide line in Florida. Additionally, 966 EPA-listed sites such as hazardous waste dumps and sewage plants lie on land 3 feet above the high tide line. Climate Central's web tool utilizes high-accuracy lidar elevation data from NOAA and provides ability to assess exposure of over 100 infrastructure, populations, and property variables from 1-10 feet above the high tide line. The tool also provides ability to tabulate vulnerability by state, county, city, town, zip code, and congressional districts, and provides projections of sea level rise and flood risk by decade. Climate

Central plans to launch the web tool for all U.S. coastal states on a state-by-state basis, with remaining states scheduled for 2014. To access the tool, visit: <http://sealevel.climatecentral.org/ssrf/florida/>.

Georgetown Climate Center Seeking Applications from Government Entities (and NGOs Working with Government Entities) to Provide In-Kind Legal and Policy Support for State and Local Adaptation Projects

The Georgetown Climate Center (GCC), a non-partisan center at Georgetown University Law Center, has is seeking applications to provide in-kind legal and policy support for state and local adaptation projects. The GCC provides assistance to state and local communities that are preparing for and responding to the impacts of climate change. Applications are being sought from government entities (or NGOs working with government entities) that need legal or policy support to identify or implement adaptation policies. Examples of previous GCC projects include model codes, analyses of legal authority, toolkits, and more. Applications will be accepted through Friday, January 3, 2014, and selected projects will be announced by the end of January 2014. To learn more and view the application form, visit: <http://www.georgetownclimate.org/application-for-requesting-in-kind-legal-and-policy-support-for-adaptation-projects-from-the-georget>.